

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

<b>UNITED STATES OF AMERICA</b>	*	<b>CRIMINAL NO. 08-0099</b>
<b>v.</b>	*	<b>SECTION: "N"</b>
<b>GREGORY L. COURTNEY</b>	*	<b>VIOLATION: 18 U.S.C. § 2</b>
		<b>18 U.S.C. § 1341</b>
	*	<b>26 U.S.C. § 7201</b>
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**FACTUAL BASIS**

Should this matter have been tried before a jury, the government would have proved beyond a reasonable doubt, through the introduction of competent testimony and admissible tangible exhibits, including the testimony of special agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division (IRS):

The defendant, **GREGORY L. COURTNEY** was an engineer for Shell Deepwater Development, Inc. (Shell) and in that capacity, among other duties, approved expenditures related to offshore well services from 2000 through 2004.

## **I. THE TAX EVASION**

**GREGORY L. COURTNEY**, then a resident of Mandeville, Louisiana, did willfully attempt to evade and defeat a large part of the income tax due and owing by him to the United States of America for the calendar year 2001 by concealing and attempting to conceal from the Internal Revenue Service the nature and extent of his income by intentionally not including on his personal tax returns, the money that he received through MES for personal use. For the purposes of reaching a plea agreement, under United States Sentencing Guideline Section 2T.1.1, the tax loss to the United States was under \$400,000.00.

## **II. THE SCHEME AND ARTIFICE TO DEFRAUD SHELL USING THE UNITED STATES MAIL**

The defendant, **GREGORY L. COURTNEY** obtained control of Mercury Equipment Company (MES) prior to 2000. MES was a company which sold and maintained oil field equipment, through which defendant, **GREGORY L. COURTNEY** received illicit funds. Defendant, **GREGORY L. COURTNEY** never held any position in MES because his involvement in MES was secret from his employer, Shell Oil Company. MES was run by associates of defendant, **GREGORY L. COURTNEY**.

MES secured an inspection contract with Shell to maintain pallet containers for oil rigs. A pallet container is a large rectangular metal box used to securely store material on oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico from wind and water. Maintenance would have included painting, welding, and replacement of slings or other parts of the pallet container. Although multiple invoices were submitted to Shell by MES, little if any maintenance of any type was ever performed on the pallet boxes. Rather, the inspection contract was a scheme and artifice to defraud Shell. The United States

mail was used to transmit the checks representing the object of the scheme to defraud Shell Oil. For purposes of reaching a plea agreement, under United States Sentencing Guidelines Section 2C.1.1, the loss to Shell Oil Company was more than \$70,000.00 but less than \$120,000.00.

All of these facts would be proven by the testimony of agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, as well as documentary evidence from business establishments in the Eastern District of Louisiana.

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CARTER K. D. GUICE, JR.  
Assistant U.S. Attorney  
Louisiana Bar Roll No. 16771

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Date

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GREGORY L. COURTNEY  
Defendant

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Date

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MICHAEL REESE DAVIS , ESQ.  
Attorney for Defendant

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Date